



# Sen. J oyce Mulliken's

## UPDATE FROM OLYMPIA

3/21/03

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**Committee Assignments**  
Land Use & Planning (Chair)  
Highways & Transportation  
Higher Education

### **Senate Bills to Watch**

**SB 5012** – Allowing charter schools in Washington.  
*(Passed the Senate 26-23 and is now in the House Education Committee)*

**SSB 5912** – Authorizing DOT to establish the Washington Railcar Pool. *(Sponsored by Sen. Mulliken, this bill passed the Senate unanimously and is now in the House Transportation Committee)*

**SSB 5179** – Allows licensed, professional trappers to trap in order to deal problem animals that are killing livestock or are a threat to public safety.  
*(Passed the Senate 37-12 and is now in the House Fisheries, Ecology and Parks)*

Dear Friends,

This week, the Senate passed two measures addressing public water systems. These proposals are critical to businesses, developers and farmers in the Columbia Basin and Eastern Washington.

**Second Substitute Senate Bill 5024** protects municipal water rights from relinquishment through nonuse – the “use it or lose it” phenomenon. Approved 33-16 by the Senate, the measure allows municipal water rights to expand up to authorized annual quantity limits as demand within a service area grows. This bill protects municipal water rights from relinquishment while allowing municipals to grow into their water right under a plan approved by the Department of Health.

The Senate also passed **Senate Bill 5145**, which adds a definition for single or group domestic uses to the state’s groundwater code. “Single or group domestic use” is defined to mean any beneficial use of groundwater for individual home sites, regardless of whether the home site was or is to be developed individually or as part of a larger project, and regardless of whether the means of withdrawal is shared with other home sites.

I sponsored this bill after a state Supreme Court ruling in 2002. In Ecology v. Campbell and Gwinn the court ruled that the permit exemption for single or group domestic uses of up to 5,000 gallons per day doesn’t apply to a group of wells constructed by a developer as part of a single development because the total withdrawal from the combined wells in the development would exceed 5,000 gallons daily.

This bill is very important to small housing developments throughout the state, especially in rural areas. These housing developments have depended on the exempt wells status. Without it, it will be much harder for small developments to be created, and it will be more difficult for counties to plan under the Growth Management Act’s requirements on potable water availability.

As always, please contact my office with your questions or concerns. It is always a pleasure to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Sen. Jovce Mulliken. 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

### **Senate passes charter school legislation**

Washington state moved one step closer to being the 40<sup>th</sup> state in the nation to allow for charter public schools with the passage of Senate Bill 5012 today. “The creation of charter schools in Washington state is an idea whose time has come,” said **Mulliken**.

“They can have a higher degree of freedom and flexibility in the classroom in exchange for a higher degree of public accountability. This is local decision-making at its very best, with parents, teachers and local school board officials deciding if they want charter schools. It’s about choice and competition.” -- *Columbia Basin Herald, 3/14/03*